DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 217 045 SP 020 389

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TITLE Search for Quality: The Sophomore Diagnostic Screening Process in the Teacher Preparation Program at New Mexico State University.
PUB DATE Feb 82
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (Houston, TX, February 19, 1982).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Admission Criteria; Core Curriculum; Curriculum Design; Diagnostic Tests; Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; Microteaching; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Remedial Instruction; *Screening Tests; *Student Evaluation; Teacher Education Programs; *Vocational Aptitude
IDENTIFIERS *New Mexico State University

ABSTRACT

The sophomore screening process at New Mexico State University's College of Education, designed to assure quality and commitment in prospective teachers, has three major components. The first is pre-screening, which requires that students successfully complete coursework in orientation to education, introduction to human growth and behavior, English composition, and mathematics. In the second component, diagnostic tests are administered in science, mathematics, and written English. The third component involves an assessment of teaching potential in which students are assessed on the knowledge and skills of effective teaching. For this component, they plan and implement microteaching lessons in the college and in the field and complete written assignments. The activities are evaluated by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. Students meet frequently with their instructor to discuss their progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan for appropriate remediation if necessary. At the end of the semester, the instructor makes final recommendations, prescriptions, and referrals for each student. Three categories of recommendations are made: (1) Specific courses may be recommended in math, science, classroom management, instructional planning, and remedial work in written English; (2) The student may be required to enroll in additional field practice if there is a question of lack of desire or potential to develop as a competent teacher; and (3) If serious doubts are raised about the student's probable success in the teacher preparation program, a selective review hearing is called. The student is informed of the purpose of the hearing, which is held to help the student make a decision regarding continuation in the program. Appended to this report are tables showing student grades and attendance for three semesters and an outline of the course requirements for the entire program. (JD)

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SEARCH FOR QUALITY:

THE SOPHOMORE DIAGNOSTIC SCREENING PROCESS

IN THE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

AT NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

AACTE Annual Meeting
Houston, Texas
February 19, 1982

SP 020 389

Today, public school teachers are criticized for being inadequately prepared. Colleges of education are under fire. Agencies outside of the colleges of education, which include legislatures, local school districts, and accreditation bodies, are threatening to rectify perceived problem areas in teacher preparation.

Colleges of education are on the defensive. Problem areas which have been identified include grade inflation and lack of appropriate selection processes of teacher education candidates. It has been claimed that these two particular conditions have contributed to the situation of teachers who are inadequately prepared to meet the requirements of today's public school classroom.

Two potential processes which might be utilized by colleges of education to cope with the dilemma of selecting students for teacher education programs include early field experiences and appropriate screening techniques.

Elliott and Mays (1979) point to the value of early field experience both to determine a student's commitment to and potential in the teaching profession, and to provide opportunities to develop those skills needed to be a successful teacher. They point to four major needs addressed by an early field experience program:

1. The student needs to know if he or she likes pupils and wants to teach
2. The university needs to know if the student has the potential of becoming a teacher
3. The student needs the opportunity to practice and develop those necessary skills prior to the time of assuming major classroom responsibilities as a student teacher
4. Teacher education needs to improve communication between colleges of education and the schools where their students will be working as teachers.

There is a lack of research which examines the effectiveness of early field experiences. Ross and Raines (1980) cite studies which indicate that while adding more frequent field experiences to education theory courses may not do much to improve course achievement, such field experiences may prove valuable in helping students to apply what is learned in developing personal philosophies and teaching styles. Austin-Martin (1981) found that a pre-student teaching field experience did positively affect the prospective teacher's interpersonal skills. Austin-Martin further hypothesized that

other gains, such as career decisions and improved motivation toward education courses, probably also occur.

Seiforth (1979) provides the following reasons for initiating early field experiences: development of practical skills, realistic career decisions, positive attitudes, self perception, and systematic analysis of teaching behavior. Additional research needs to be done on the effectiveness of field-based experiences prior to student teaching.

Ellsworth (1979) reviewed the published literature concerning college and university screening practices for prospective teacher education students. Colleges of education typically use one, or a combination of the following: (1) grade point average, (2) personal interviews, (3) speech and/or hearing, (4) personality inventories, (5) language proficiency, and (6) self-report questionnaires. Ellsworth found few studies seemed to exist that evaluate the effectiveness of screening criteria.

Little if any research is available concerning the use of a first education course combined with an early field experience as an effective screening device in the selection of prospective teachers. Van Patten (1977, p. 10) reports that such a combination, when used with other criteria, would "yield better overall selection results." New Mexico State University is utilizing such a program called the Sophomore Screening Process, which is implemented during a semester when students combine an on-campus theory class with public school field experience.

Although historically a screening process had been in use in the College of Education for numerous years, it appeared to be implemented in a somewhat inconsistent manner. Collaboration between departments and follow-up procedures were not congruent with philosophical guidelines.

Total commitment to the sophomore screening process came about with a curriculum change in the Fall of 1972. Prior to this time sophomores were enrolled in Education 201, which was primarily content oriented and conducted through large class lecture. These students spent only two days in the public school setting. One day was devoted to observation; the second day the student participated directly in the public school classroom. Approximately 200 students were cycled each semester. An assessment of the

progress and potential of each individual student was not easily accomplished in this situation. Because of the felt need to get to know each student on an individual basis, the screening process was built into the new sophomore course entitled Education 211, Educational Process and Laboratory. At the same time this change took place at the sophomore level, a similar change was accomplished at the freshman level with the introduction of Education 111, Professional Seminar.

The sophomore screening process, as implemented through Education 211, has three major components. The first component is pre-screening which is implicit in the prerequisites for the course. Students enrolling in Education 211 must have successfully completed coursework which includes an orientation to education, an introduction to human growth and behavior, English composition, and mathematics. The second screening area relates to general education requirements. Diagnostic tests in science and math are administered to all students, and a variety of writing samples are evaluated to determine proficiency in written English.

The third area involves the assessment of teaching potential. This is the most complex component of the screening process. Several measures and procedures are used to gather and evaluate data indicative of probable success in the teaching profession. Students complete written assignments and engage in a variety of assessment activities relevant to the knowledge and skills judged essential to effective teaching. In addition, students plan and implement microteaching lessons in the college television studio and in the public school classroom. Evaluation of student performance in the public school classroom is carried out by the cooperating teachers and by the university supervisors. Cooperating teachers provide two written evaluations during the semester. As part of the assessment process students meet individually with the instructor to discuss their progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan for appropriate remediation if necessary. At the end of the semester, the instructor makes final recommendations, prescriptions, and referrals for each student. These are discussed with the student at a final conference.

There are three categories in which recommendations and referrals are made. The first concerns deficiencies in general or professional education subject matter. Based on the results of diagnostic tests the instructor will recommend or prescribe specific math or science courses. Courses dealing with classroom management and instructional planning are also recommended or prescribed on the basis of student performance in the college classroom and in the public school classroom. If any courses are prescribed, the student's folder is flagged and the student must successfully complete the prescribed courses in order to be eligible for student teaching. If the instructor has observed a student's written English to be below acceptable standards, the student is referred to the English department for remediation. The student must then be released by the English department to be eligible for a degree.

The second category of remediation concerns the student who has not demonstrated adequate ability to translate theory into practice in the public school classroom. If either the student, the cooperating teacher, or the university professor is not confident that the student has the desire and the potential to develop competence as a teacher, the student may be required to enroll in an additional field experience. This alternative provides the student with more exposure to a classroom situation and further opportunity for practical application of knowledge and skills.

The final category of recommendations is the selective review committee which is composed of the course instructor(s) and the head of the department of Curriculum and Instruction. If the instructor, based on personal observations or on the recommendation of the cooperating teacher, has serious doubts about the student's probable success in the teacher preparation program, a selective review hearing is called. The student is informed of the purpose of the hearing which is to help the student make an appropriate decision regarding continuation in the program. The student is advised of the specific concerns of the committee. If, after a discussion of the performance, potential, and preference of the student, the committee is satisfied that the student should have the opportunity to continue in the program, various forms of remediation and counseling are

prescribed or recommended. The student can then choose to drop out of the program or agree to fulfull the requirements set by the committee and continue in the program.

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Seiforth, Berniece, and Samuel, Marie. The emergence of early field experiences. Peabody Journal of Education, 56: 10-16, October, 1979.

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EDUC. 211
FALL, 1979
Edelson/Martin

Number of students		Elem.	Sec.	Total
		52	40	92
GRADES:	A	34	14	48
	B	12	16	28
	C	5	8	13
	D	0	2	2
	F	1	0	1
Prescribed Courses				
	Educ. 350	0	0	0
	Educ. 351	1	0	1
	Educ. 360	2	6	8
	Educ. 366	4	1	5
Recommended Courses				
	Educ. 350	1	19	20
	Educ. 351	1	0	1
	Educ. 360	10	4	14
	Educ. 366	11	10	21
English Drop-in Lab		2	0	2
English Referral		2	2	4
Selective Review		1	0	1
Repeat 211		0	2	2

Education 211
Spring, 1980
Edelson/Martin

Number of students		Elem.	Sec.	Total
		59	33	92
Grades:	A	33	13	46
	B	15	8	23
	C	8	8	16
	D	1	2	3
	F	1	2	3
	I	1	-	1
Prescribed Courses:				
	Educ. 350	5	1	6
	Educ. 351	2	-	2
	Educ. 360	-	19	19
	Educ. 366	27	9	36
Recommended Courses:				
	Educ. 350	6	15	21
	Educ. 351	3	-	3
	Educ. 360	-	5	5
	Educ. 366	4	3	7
English Drop-in Lab		7	-	7
English Referral		2	1	3
Selective Review		2	5	7
Repeat 211		3	2	5

EDUC. 211
FALL, 1981
Reece

During Fall 1981, a total of 61 students were enrolled in Educ. 211. Final grades were distributed as follows:

A - 15
B - 20
C - 15
D - 5
F - 3
W - 3

Of the 61 students, 41 were referred to various courses or laboratories for removal of deficiencies in math, science literacy, English writing, or classroom management. Students were referred as follows:

Classroom Management (Educ. 350) - 1
Math Deficiency (Educ. 360) - 16
Science Literacy (Educ. 367) - 26
English Referral (English Lab) - 15

Of the 41 students who were referred, 23 were referred in only one area, 12 were referred in two areas, and 4 were referred in three areas.

Selective reviews have been called for seven of these students.

EDUC. 211
SPRING, 1982
Martin

Number of students	Elem.	Sec.	Total
	28	30	58
Prescribed Courses			
Educ. 360	6	17	23
Educ. 367	11	7	18
Recommended Courses			
Educ. 360	0	2	2
Educ. 367	6	9	15

REFERRAL FORM FOR EDUCATION 200/211 STUDENTS

Level II Professional Education

Student: _____ Semester: _____

Instructor: _____ Course(s) Taught: _____

Prescription Regarding This Student: 1st Teaching Field: _____

_____None Required 2nd Teaching Field: _____

_____Specific course(s) prescribed:

_____

_____

_____Specific course(s) recommended:

_____

_____

_____Student indicates that he/she will not remain in the teacher preparation program

_____Selective Review Committee should be called for the following reasons:

_____

_____

_____

_____

I, _____ have been informed of the above
(name of student)

recommendations and/or prescriptions _____
(date)

Date of Selective Review Committee Hearing _____

Disposition of Committee:

Name_____ Catalog Year_____

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION CHECK LIST
FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENTS

DURING THE FRESHMAN YEAR, students should enroll in the following:

_____EDUC 111, Professional Orientation----------1
_____CEP 110, Human Growth and Behavior----------3

DURING THE SOPHOMORE YEAR, students should enroll in the following courses:

_____CEP 210, Educational Psychology----------3
And DURING ONE SEMESTER:
_____EDUC 211, Educational Processes and Laboratory----------4
_____EDUC 213, Instructional Media----------3

PREREQUISITES FOR ADMISSION TO EDUC 211:

_____a. A grade of C or better in ENGL 111
_____b. Successful completion of CEP 110
_____c. A grade of C or better in EDUC 111
_____d. A grade of C or better in RDG 113, or an ACT composite score of 22 or better
_____e. Good academic standing (i.e., no academic probation)
_____f. Successful completion of MATH 111 and 112, FOR ELEMENTARY MAJORS ONLY.
OR
Successful completion of general education requirement in MATH (110, 115, etc.), FOR SECONDARY MAJORS ONLY.

DURING THE JUNIOR YEAR, students should APPLY FOR STUDENT TEACHING BY FEBRUARY 15 and enroll in:

_____CEP 410, Evaluating Pupil Growth----------2
_____EDUC _____, Education elective----------(1-3)

DURING THE SENIOR YEAR students should enroll in EDUC 445/446 (secondary) or 447/448 (elementary), Teaching Lab/Student Teaching

PREREQUISITES FOR ADMISSION TO STUDENT TEACHING:

_____CEP 110
_____CEP 210
_____CEP 410
_____Introductory Speech Course
_____Senior Standing (94 credits)
_____1st Teaching Field GPA of 2.70
_____2nd Teaching Field GPA of 2.50
_____Professional EDUC GPA of 3.00
_____Overall GPA of 2.25

_____EDUC 211
_____EDUC 213

All Deficiencies Removed
_____Selective Review
_____English/Writing
_____Math
_____Speech
_____Science Literacy

ELEMENTARY

_____21 credits in Elem. Teaching Field including:
_____RDG 350, Diag. Tch./Rdg. Elem Sch.
_____RDG 355, Rdg. Proc/Meth & Mat./Elem. Sch.
_____MATH 311/EDUC 454

SECONDARY

_____21 credits in 1st Teaching Field including:
_____RDG 356, Rdg. in Content Field

The Sophomore Screening Process at New Mexico State University

Introduction and Background

General Education

- Diagnostic Areas
  - Math
  - Science
  - English
- Diagnostic Procedures
  - Proficiency Tests
  - Writing Samples

Professional Education

- Diagnostic Areas
  - Planning for Instruction
  - Classroom Management
  - Practical Application of Teaching Skills
- Diagnostic Procedures
  - Written assignments and tests
  - Demonstration of skills
    - simulated experiences
    - public school classroom

Recommendations and Prescriptions
- Additional coursework
- Developmental field experience
- Remedial English
  - referral
  - drop-in lab
- Counseling

Screening Conferences
- Mid-term
- Final
- Selective Review Committee

Follow-up on Implementation of Prescriptions
- Advisement folders
- Student teaching applications

LIMITATIONS:

- Diagnostic tests
- Field supervision
- Public school placements
- Conferences
- Follow-up